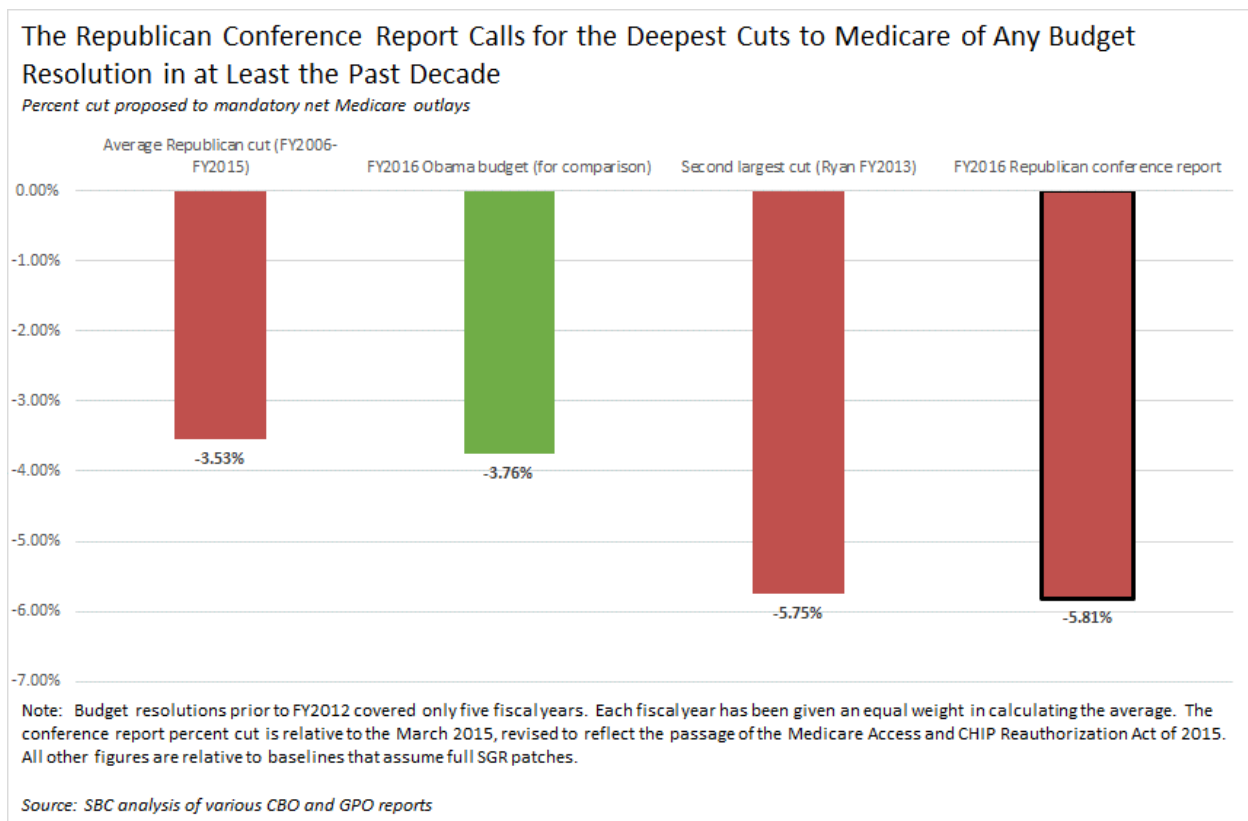


The Republican Conference Report Calls for the Deepest Cuts to Medicare in at Least a Decade

Yesterday, the Senate Republicans passed their [budget conference report](#). Having already cleared the House without a single Democratic vote, the Republican budget's mix of draconian spending cuts on programs relied on by working, middle-class families and tax cuts for millionaires and billionaires almost defies belief in its simple lack of fairness.

One example of the Republican budget's skewed priorities is its approach to Medicare. **In percentage terms, the Republican conference report calls for the deepest cuts to Medicare of any budget resolution or conference report in at least the past decade.**



Despite Republicans' assertion that their proposed mandatory outlay cuts to Medicare simply mirror the cuts found in the President's budget request to Congress, this is simply untrue: The Republican budget calls for roughly \$150 billion more than the President.

According to the Congressional Budget Office's [analysis of the President's budget](#), his policies would reduce Medicare outlays by \$279 billion.¹ In contrast, the Republican plan is to cut Medicare \$431 billion over the decade – or 5.8 percent. Further, that figure is likely an

¹ This figure reflects CBO's score of the President's proposals, relative to a baseline that patched the SGR ("doc fix"). Since the President proposed his budget, Congress passed, and the President signed, the Medicare Access and CHIP Reauthorization Act of 2015, which, among other changes, repealed the SGR. The Republican conference report has been assessed relative to a baseline that reflects these changes.

underestimate because it does not include any of the Republican budget's additional \$177 billion in unallocated mandatory cuts over the decade.²

To put these proposed cuts in perspective, they are more than 2 percentage points deeper than that of the average Republican budget over the past decade. In other words, the difference between their proposed Medicare cut this year and in years past is larger than *the entirety of the Medicare sequestration cuts*.

Lastly, it is important to keep in mind that not all cuts are equal. Even if the Republicans were being honest in saying their proposed Medicare cuts were the same size as the President's, that does not mean they include policies that crack down on Medicare overpayments or increase efficiency in Medicare or reduce the program's costs. Instead, all we know of the Republicans' Medicaid proposal is a "policy statement" in the legislative text ([Section 6206](#)) that proposes turning Medicare into a voucher program, which would cut federal costs only by shifting them to the least healthy Medicare beneficiaries. Indeed, CBO has projected that seniors who would remain on traditional fee-for-service Medicare would see their premiums rise by [as much as 50 percent](#) under the voucherization plan tucked into the Republican budget.

The Republican budget's cuts to Medicare are emblematic of a document with startlingly wrong-headed priorities.

² This figure excludes both the Republican-claimed macroeconomic effects of their budget and the existing across-the-board mandatory sequestration cuts.